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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 000499

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STATE FOR D AND AF/S FRAZER

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [UN](#) [AU](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: DARFUR PEACE PROCESS: CHARTING A WAY FORWARD

REF: A. KHARTOUM 456

[1](#)B. KHARTOUM 477

[1](#)C. KHARTOUM 498

Classified By: CDA Cameron Hume for reasons: Section 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. Summary. The Darfur peace process needs to enter the endgame. The Abuja peace talks, despite gradual progress, have failed to deliver a deal between key rebel leaders and the Sudanese government. The African Union has yet to request the United Nations to take over the peace-keeping operation, and action at the United Nations has stalled. Other problems remain: the Sudanese Government simultaneously pursues contradictory policies; the fractious rebel movements are without a solid political program; and, the AU mediation is timid. The situation on the ground is deteriorating. Nevertheless, renewed U.S. leadership in the coming weeks can push the parties toward an agreement and narrow the gaps on the peace-keeping mission in Darfur. End Summary.

[1](#)2. Getting to Closure: The parties have to cut their deal to get to closure. The United States can expedite this process only by working with and through partners to create a sense of momentum and inevitability. Neither party has any realistic reason to believe that time is on its side, so pressure to strike a deal could yield results. During March such pressure can be exerted if the AU mediation pursues its work with new methods and vigor, if UN peace-keeping planning can be used to secure solid AU support for rehatting, and if the United States and its partners push the parties to make deals on wealth-sharing, on power-sharing, and, if possible, on security arrangements.

[1](#)3. Endgame Elements: The AU mediation needs new methods and vigor. The parties have become comfortable dithering over details. At last the JEM's Dr. Khalil and SLA's Mini Minawi have traveled to the talks. Next, the mediators must end piece-meal discussions and put all elements on the table in one paper. Doing so will make trade-offs possible and focus discussion on core issues. International "partners" will have to display discipline and insist that the parties have no alternative to negotiations based on the mediator's text. When the parties are left with one or two difficult decisions, the USG should exert influence to close gaps.

[1](#)4. Spoilers: For the Government of Sudan, activity by the hard-line Islamic-nationalist element rejecting any outside support for implementation. For rebel movements, further fragmentation of command and control on the ground; inability to stand behind signatures of negotiators. For the African Union, bowing to Libyan and Sudanese views and minimizing the UN role in implementation, or discounting the leverage African governments will gain as troop contributors for a UN-led operation. For the United Nations, being too demanding and rigid in selection of troops and planning a mandate that does more than keep peace, protect civilians,

and manage disarmament and demobilization. Whatever the details of a peace-keeping operation, it will be a big challenge to achieve the disarming of Arab militias.

15. Assessing Sudanese Government's Package: The Sudanese government has given us its package for the mediation. The wealth-sharing provisions are based on Abuja discussions, plus seed money for a window at the World Bank co-ordinated multi-donor trust fund. The power-sharing offer splits many differences, yields on the 1956 border, gives some positions in the national executive, and offers the possibility of a Darfur regional government but denies a vice presidency or a role in the government of Khartoum state. The security package is patterned on a typical formula for disarmament and demobilization with two major differences, use of Joint Integrated Units (JIUs) formed from Sudanese Army and SPLM troops and no UN. If moved as a package, the mediation could expect to secure agreement (initialing) of the first two chapters but probably not the third. However, a 2/3rds solution would put huge pressure on the parties to move forward further, and the last third would involve under any scenario more negotiations with the United Nations, African Union, and perhaps other international partners. This package is less than a best and final offer, and its promoters assume negotiations will modify it further. We should work with it, both to end Darfur's tragedy but also to promote the first real cooperation by the partners in the government of national unity.

16. Responding to President Bashir's Letter: An early response to President Bashir's letter (ref A) could activate the process and restate the lines of U.S. policy. Such a response could state that the USG is determined to promote peace in Sudan urgently and ready to work together to this end. It could welcome the recent Sudanese government package

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(ref B and C) as an important contribution but one that must be subject to negotiations with the parties. It should state the U.S. view that peace-keeping will require a strong UN role, but with a real peace the gap can be made manageable.

17. Consultation with AU Mediation: Without a more determined role by the AU mediators the endgame will remain elusive. Special Representative Winter recently expressed USG views to AU mediator Salim. Could Salim be induced to attend the expected March 8 meeting in Brussels for AU financing (or alternatively be available on the margins of the March 9-10 Sudan consortium meeting in Paris)? If so, there could be an important high-level opportunity for the USG to press directly for Salim, taking into account the recent package, to table a single, comprehensive negotiating text. Salim needs to feel the urgency of getting a victory for the AU mediation. The wealth-sharing and power-sharing chapters can be brought to closure at the table, an AU/UN partnership on peace-keeping can be used to close the gap on security arrangements. An endgame is not a spontaneous happening. The mediators must have a plan and then put the pieces together.

18. Possible Meeting with First Vice President Kiir and Vice President Taha: It appears that FVP Kiir, VP Taha, and the Deputy Secretary will all be in Paris for the March 9-10 donors' meeting. In a separate meeting at that time the Sudanese side could re-affirm its shared commitment to working for a negotiated solution; the U.S. could restate its view of UN peace-keeping as part of a solution. Both sides would have to agree on next steps regarding the AU mediation.

If there is a realistic opportunity to start the endgame now, such a meeting would be the best way to get it started.
HUME